

**SHERIFF DENITA R. BALL****Intra-Agency Communication**

August 23, 2024

TO: All MCSO Sworn Staff
FROM: Chief Deputy Daniel R. Hughes
SUBJECT: Staffing Changes for Sworn Personnel

For many years, all areas of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office, but specifically the Courts Division, has had copious amounts of mandated/forced overtime to maintain minimal operations. This is because there are not enough budgetarily approved positions for the Courts Division. We do not have enough deputy sheriffs employed to fulfill the budgeted position requirements in every division, and even if we did, there is not the proper "relief factor" of additional authorized positions to cover shortages, aside from copious amounts of overtime. Additional positions have been requested by the MCSO over the years to try to strategically abate this issue over time and those requests have been denied. Further, the Courts Division has been the area where the majority of overtime is worked because, contractually, it gives the MCSO the largest pool of available deputies from other divisions to fill those shortages, thus spreading the overtime responsibilities across the most people possible.

As you are all well aware, this has resulted in seven-day-service deputy sheriffs (Patrol and Airport) working 16-hour double shifts and, in many cases, two or three days in a row just to achieve minimal staffing to fulfill our constitutional and statutory requirements for the court system. We have lost extensive numbers of deputies over the last several years to resignation and retirement for this reason alone - many of which likely would not have left had it not been for this issue. We have lost more deputies, year-to-date in 2024, than in all of 2023. Thirteen percent (13%) of our budgeted deputies have left YTD 2024 (34 of 267) and we are fifty (50) working deputies short throughout the agency every day (19%).

This situation has now reached unprecedented levels of mandated overtime for our workforce. Just this past week, we had twenty-four deputies from two separate divisions work 32 hours of mandated overtime in just the first week of the pay period. This does not account for the 80 hours of straight time and any additional unanticipated overtime each one of them have had to work as a

result of circumstances related to their regular straight time duties (e.g. unanticipated arrests), nor does it account for all the other members working overtime but didn't quite reach the 32 hour cap for mandated overtime resulting from circumstances related to their regular straight time duties. Just in this 32-hour scenario, that is at least 112 hours worked by each of those deputies in a two week pay period by individuals who are expected to make split second, life, and death decisions, without any failure or mistakes from possibly occurring. It is not a matter of "if" something bad will happen, but "when" will it happen. None of this even contemplates the havoc this is wreaking on our members' health and well-being or the devastation on their family lives.

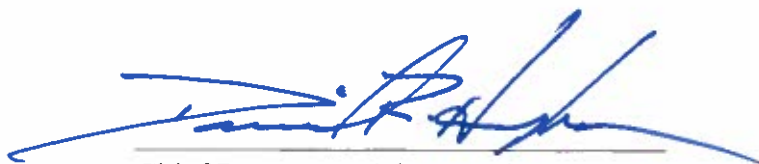
This cannot continue. This situation we have been put in is not representative of having the healthiest county in Wisconsin, and it is certainly not healthy for our agency members. We are out of "creative" or even "good" options and have no other choices available to us, so now we must move on to choices that have drastic consequences. Frankly, if we do not impose drastic changes now, we will continue to lose people at an unprecedented rate and will not have enough people to minimally staff our constitutional, statutory, and contractual responsibilities.

Therefore, effective Sunday September 8, 2024, to the detriment of the MCSO Patrol Division, we are transferring deputies to staff the Courts Division to achieve the fully budgeted allotment of ninety (90) deputies. When that is done, all shortages within the Courts Division (from vacations, holidays, sick absences, FMLA, etc.) will be handled with the authorized budgeted number of deputies assigned to the Courts Division. To be clear, this means that we will no longer force deputy sheriffs on overtime from other divisions to cover operational shortages in the Courts Division nor will we schedule any volunteer overtime for those same shortages. This will also mean that maintaining operational functionality in the Courts Division will be more challenging since the personnel assigned will have to accomplish everything in the division with their daily shortages. Further, there will likely be other changes to other divisions forthcoming in the near future.

It is unfortunate that we are at this place, but we are out of options and hard decisions must be made.

Thank you for your continued dedication and unwavering commitment to the citizens of Milwaukee County and this agency, in light of the relentless staffing challenges. Your faithful service is appreciated.

Respectfully,



Chief Deputy Daniel R. Hughes